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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/720,851	11/24/2003	Fumikatsu Uesawa	09792909-5787	5189
26263	7590	12/10/2004	EXAMINER	
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CHICAGO, IL 60606-1080				ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER
				2813

DATE MAILED: 12/10/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/720,851	UESAWA, FUMIKATSU	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Stephen W. Smoot	2813	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 29 September 2004.
- 2a) This action is **FINAL**. 2b) This action is non-final.
- 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 1-4 and 6-16 is/are pending in the application.
 - 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) Claim(s) 1-4,7,8,10 and 12-15 is/are allowed.
- 6) Claim(s) 6,9,11 and 16 is/are rejected.
- 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) The drawing(s) filed on 24 November 2003 is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 10/154,237.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
- 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

This Office action is in response to applicant's amendment filed on 29 September 2004.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

2. Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Use of the terms FLARE and SILK to identify the first mask material in claim 11 is indefinite because the claim scope is uncertain since a trademark or trade name cannot be used properly to identify any particular material or product [see MPEP section 2173.05(u)].

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 6, 9, 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Hui et al. (US 6,514,868 B1).

Referring to Figs. 1-4 and column 3, line 15 to column 4, line 38, Hui et al. disclose a method of forming a contact hole that includes the following features:

- An ILD layer (14) is formed directly on a silicon substrate (12);
- An ARC layer (26) is formed over the ILD layer (14);
- The ARC layer (26) can be a dielectric material like silicon nitride or silicon oxynitride;
- A patterned photoresist material (22) is used to define contact holes (18);
- The photoresist pattern (22) is transferred to the ARC layer (26) by etching it with a tapered angle such that the bottom of the ARC layer (26) has narrowed openings;

- The narrowed openings are transferred to the ILD layer (14) to form vertically etched contact holes (18) as shown in Fig. 1; and
- The contact holes (18) have widths (35) that are narrower than conventional lithographic critical dimensions (29) (also see abstract).

These are all of the limitations set forth in claims 6, 9, 16 of the applicant's invention.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 1-4, 7-8, 10, 12-15 are allowed.

6. The following is a statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter: Claims 1-4, 7-8, 10, 12-15 are allowed because the prior art of record does not teach or suggest, in combination with the other claim limitations, a method of manufacturing a semiconductor apparatus that includes forming a tapered aperture pattern in a first mask material and using the first mask material to vertically etch an aperture into a film, wherein the bottom of the tapered aperture pattern has a dimension that exceeds the capabilities of lithography techniques and wherein the first mask material is made of an organic insulation film.

Conclusion

7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. Hills and Loke et al. teach vertical etching methods that utilize hard masks with tapered openings.

8. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new grounds of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Stephen W. Smoot whose telephone number is 571-272-1698. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F (8:00 am to 4:30 pm).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl Whitehead, Jr. can be reached on 571-272-1702. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

sws

Stephen W. Smoot
Patent Examiner
Art Unit 2813